

IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

In re the Application of  
Norio Sakuma and  
Harushige Ikeda

Serial No.:

Filed: herewith

For: PAPERMAKING BELT

PRELIMINARY AMENDMENT

BOX PATENT APPLICATION  
Commissioner for Patents  
Washington, DC 20231

Sir:

Please enter the following preliminary amendment:

In the specification:

At page 1, before the heading "Field of the Invention",  
insert the following heading and paragraph:

CROSS REFERENCE TO RELATED APPLICATION

This is a division of pending U.S. patent application  
serial number 09/366,628, filed August 3, 1999.

In the claims:

Cancel claims 1 and 2, and add the following new claims:

3(new). A papermaking machine having at least one belt  
for transporting a paper sheet along a path in the machine  
wherein the paper sheet is in parallel, juxtaposed relation to

a surface of the belt, the belt comprising a base layer and a resin layer overlying or underlying the base layer when the papermaking belt is mounted on a papermaking machine, the resin layer having a middle part and opposite side edge parts, wherein the thickness of the opposite side edge parts of the resin layer is smaller than that of the middle part thereof, whereby curling of side edges of the belt is prevented by suppressing differential thermal contraction between the base layer and the resin layer.

4(new). A papermaking machine according to claim 3, wherein said belt is a belt from the group consisting of shoe press belts and transfer belts.

5(new). A papermaking machine according to claim 3, in which the papermaking machine includes rollers having cylindrical surfaces over which the belt travels, and in which the belt has opposite parallel surfaces, one of which contacts the cylindrical surfaces of the rollers over its entire width.

6. A papermaking machine having at least one belt for transporting a paper sheet along a path in the machine wherein the paper sheet is in parallel, juxtaposed relation to a surface of the belt, the belt comprising a base layer having opposite surfaces, a thin resin layer formed on one of the surfaces of the base layer and a thick resin layer formed on the other surface of the base layer, the thick resin layer having a middle part and opposite side edge parts, wherein the thickness of the opposite side edge parts of the thick resin layer is smaller than that of the middle part thereof, whereby curling of side edges of the belt is prevented by suppressing differential thermal contraction between the base layer and the thick resin layer.

7(new). A papermaking machine according to claim 6, wherein said belt is a belt from the group consisting of shoe press belts and transfer belts.

8(new). A papermaking machine according to claim 6, in which the papermaking machine includes rollers having cylindrical surfaces over which the belt travels, and in which the belt has opposite parallel surfaces, one of which contacts the cylindrical surfaces of the rollers over its entire width.

9(new). A papermaking process comprising the transportation of a paper sheet along a path in a papermaking machine on a belt mounted in the papermaking machine, wherein the paper sheet is in parallel, juxtaposed relation to a surface of the belt, wherein the belt comprises a base layer, and a resin layer overlying or underlying the base layer, the resin layer having a middle part and opposite side edge parts, wherein the thickness of the opposite side edge parts of the resin layer is smaller than that of the middle part thereof, whereby curling of side edges of the belt is prevented by suppressing differential thermal contraction between the base layer and the resin layer.

10(new). A papermaking process according to claim 9, wherein said belt is a belt is utilized in the papermaking machine as a shoe press belt or as a transfer belt.

11(new). A papermaking process according to claim 9, in which the belt travels over cylindrical surfaces of rollers in the papermaking machine, and in which the belt has opposite parallel surfaces, one of which contacts the cylindrical surfaces of the rollers over its entire width.

12(new). A papermaking process comprising the transportation of a paper sheet along a path in a papermaking machine on a belt mounted in the papermaking machine, wherein the paper sheet is in parallel, juxtaposed relation to a surface of the belt, wherein the belt comprises a base layer having opposite surfaces, a thin resin layer formed on one of the surfaces of the base layer and a thick resin layer formed on the other surface of the base layer, the thick resin layer having a middle part and opposite side edge parts, wherein the thickness of the opposite side edge parts of the thick resin layer is smaller than that of the middle part thereof, whereby curling of side edges of the belt is prevented by suppressing differential thermal contraction between the base layer and the thick resin layer.

13(new). A papermaking process according to claim 12, wherein said belt is a belt is utilized in the papermaking machine as a shoe press belt or as a transfer belt.

14(new). A papermaking process according to claim 12, in which the belt travels over cylindrical surfaces of rollers in the papermaking machine, and in which the belt has opposite parallel surfaces, one of which contacts the cylindrical surfaces of the rollers over its entire width.

#### REMARKS

In the parent application, claims directed to the belt were rejected on the power transmission belts of Stanhope 5,658,655 or Kawashima et al. 5,753,369, on the ground that the claims lacked structural differences that patentably distinguish the invention from the art. Machine claims (reciting the belt in combination with a papermaking machine)

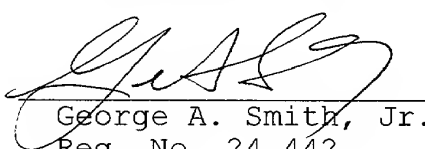
were withdrawn from consideration on the ground that they were directed to a non-elected invention. The Examiner suggested that claims clearly drawn to a "process of using" may distinguish the invention over Stanhope and Kawashima.

Claims 3-8 of this application correspond closely to the machine claims withdrawn from consideration in the parent application. Claims 9 and 12 are process claims which closely track the language of machine claims 3 and 6, respectively. It is submitted that all of claims 3-14 are directed to a single invention. It is also submitted that claims 3-14 define patentable subject matter, especially in that there is nothing in Stanhope or Kawashima et al. that shows or suggests the use of their belts for transporting a paper sheet in a papermaking machine.

Examination and allowance of claims 3-14 are respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,  
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